

New York Times Bestseller

UPLIFTING SERVICE

The Proven Path

*to Delighting Your Customers, Colleagues,
and Everyone Else You Meet*

RON
KAUFMAN

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Praise for *Uplifting Service*

“Read this book, apply the steps. Watch your culture transform and your perspective on service change forever. Ron Kaufman has unlocked the mystery of service. Get ready for a magnificent journey into a new world.”

Marshall Goldsmith

Bestselling Author of *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*

“Ron Kaufman has pinpointed a massive wound in society, and offers a strategy on how to uplift the world around us. For mankind, it's transformational. For business, it's a clean and clear path to a sustainable competitive advantage. This book is long overdue, and will certainly create a legendary shift.”

Thomas Moran

Director, Customer and Partner Experience

Microsoft Operations

“*Uplifting Service* is a much needed breath of fresh air for our troubled times. Service authority Ron Kaufman has distilled his global perspective into a blueprint for delighting customers. This is a critical skill now that social media has amplified customers' voices many times over. If you have customers you must read this now.”

Stephen M. R. Covey and Greg Link

Bestselling Authors of *Smart Trust*

“*Uplifting Service* gets to the bottom of what every great business should be, and then uplifts it. Ron's message is timely and the architecture he provides for building a service culture is timeless. This is a necessary book for every business.”

Ann Rhoades

Board Member, JetBlue Airways

Bestselling Author of *Built on Values*

“There’s no substitute for great service and Ron Kaufman has captured both the why and the how in this book. Do yourself a favor and read *Uplifting Service* today—it will definitely help you to be more successful professionally and personally.”

Arte Nathan
President & COO, Strategic Development Worldwide

“In *Uplifting Service*, Ron Kaufman convincingly reveals why the right kind of service can transform your business, and he also provides a detailed and easy-to-follow blueprint. Every CEO, manager and employee who provides service to others should not only read this book, but use it as an ongoing reference.”

Adrian Gostick and Chester Elton
Bestselling Authors of *The Carrot Principle* and *All In*

“I am utterly pleased with *Uplifting Service*. Ron Kaufman has brilliantly and poetically served the world by framing a concept that will undoubtedly impact business, and will change the perspective of every reader and organization that embraces this book. Kaufman provides real-world application of academic thought. He defines a common service language. He oversteps the cumbersome and often cliché commercialism of so many books. This book will uplift service.”

Professor Jochen Wirtz
Director, UCLA – NUS Executive MBA Program
National University of Singapore

“I’ve seen the corporate landscape evolve. And I’ve seen many aspects remain static—unchanged but not unchangeable. Ron Kaufman shows us how we can evolve with his book, *Uplifting Service*. This is the ultimate goal: to elevate and rise above yesterday.”

Warren Bennis
Bestselling Author of *Still Surprised: Memoir of a Life in Leadership*

“*Uplifting Service* reveals the ‘big picture’ and the power of service today. Ron Kaufman gives every company the tools to build a client base of *Raving Fans*®!”

Ken Blanchard

Bestselling Author of *The One Minute Manager* and *Gung Ho!*

“Ron Kaufman deserves a standing ovation for *Uplifting Service*! Finally, a book that unveils all the secrets to becoming a service icon. This book not only will help you delight your customers, but it shows you how to uplift your entire organization from the inside-out. Every service provider and business leader should read this book.”

Simon Ho

CEO, CapitaMall Trust Management Limited

“*Uplifting Service* is one book every leader must read and every service provider should embrace as their guide. Read it, apply it, and then recommend your customers read it. This book will immediately elevate the value of your relationships. I have witnessed and walked on this proven path and have seen the results that follow. Now is the right time for you and your customers to experience this uplifting transformation as well.”

Jagdish Ramaswamy

Chief Quality Officer, Wipro

“If people are your business, this is the book to read. *Uplifting Service* will instantly uplift the value of your human capital: leadership, front line, and everyone in-between!”

Rick Curzon

Executive Director, HR Summit Singapore



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RON
KAUFMAN

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P R E F A C E

A Personal Path to Service



For the past 40 years I have been on a mission to improve the world. The vision that motivates and sustains me is a world in which everyone is educated and inspired to excel in service to others.

In support of this mission, I have flown more than ten million miles, visited three hundred cities, and worked with businesses in every industry from high fashion to high technology, government agencies, schools, associations, and voluntary service organizations. I help people become better service providers, and help organizations build uplifting and self-sustaining service cultures.

I define service as taking action to take care of someone else. Or, in commercial terms: *Service is taking action to create value for someone else.* The surprising upside is that improving the service you give someone else also benefits you. Providing uplifting service to others naturally enriches your relationships, improves your network of support, and contributes to your own success.

People often ask me where I get my intense passion for this topic of uplifting service. I consistently and candidly reply, “I get my

passion from you.” It delights me to see people succeed by contributing to the lives of others. That’s what this book will do for you: show you how you can add more value to others, and gain more for yourself.

Life Lessons

Unusual people and events have powerfully shaped my life, and the lessons I’ve learned from them are the roots of my unrelenting passion. My grandmother was my earliest inspiration. She taught kindergarten in New York City for 40 years, and when I visited her class, I felt like the most important person in the world. My grandmother made everyone feel like the most important person in the world.

She’d give one child a compliment and give another a helping hand. She’d read to one group while answering questions from another. She’d separate two fighting five-year-olds and manage to make them both feel good. And at the end of the day, she reassured every parent that his or her messy, noisy, rambunctious child was the most precious miracle in her classroom.

What amazed me was my grandmother’s ability to do this all day, all year, for 40 years. Every time she made a child smile, she seemed to get more energized, like her battery was being charged over and over again. She got as much juice out of teaching the kids as they got from being with her. The lesson I learned from watching my grandmother work was as clear to me then as it is today: *providing service to someone else gives you something back. Making other people feel good somehow makes you stronger.* Grandma Bea was the first great teacher in my life. Her intention to serve was the most memorable thing about her. She called it love.

While my grandmother taught me the beauty of service, a Frisbee disc opened the door to a life of serving others.

I am not a tall person. Actually, I'm short. Most team sports were out of my reach as a kid. All that changed when a local high school teacher, Al Jolley, introduced the Frisbee game called Ultimate in our school, and formed a team that anyone could join. But still, because I was short and not very good at throwing or catching a Frisbee, I was often the last person picked.

Dan Buckley was a much more experienced player, and he sported a heart as big as his Frisbee-flinging sidearm throw. He not only picked the smaller people so we could play; he actually threw the disc to us and encouraged us whether we caught it or dropped it, made a decent or another lousy throw. My grandmother had every reason to be nice to little people; she was a kindergarten teacher and she was my grandmother. Dan had no apparent external motivation for being so generous. His reason came from within.

The first official rule in Ultimate is called "the Spirit of the Game." It holds players fully accountable for their behavior on a playing field with no referees. Dan did not just follow this rule; he lived it and I learned a powerful lesson from his example. *Everybody wants to play in this life. Give people enough encouragement and opportunity, and they will rise to the occasion, often surprising you with their commitment and contribution.*

After high school I enrolled at Brown University where I studied history and was captain of the Ultimate team. On the Frisbee field we learned how to work and win together on a small scale. As a student of human history, I was shocked by how often people all over the world fail at living well together on a large scale. Humanity seems to have a long-standing addiction to misunderstanding,

mistrust, and armed conflict. Hardly the spirit of the game I thought we could be playing.

In my studies, I wasn't as interested in learning why war broke out as I was curious to understand how people came back together. Trade and commerce play roles in reconnecting people after war. But I was more intrigued by the endearing and emotionally enduring connections: sporting events, pen pals, student exchanges, and sister cities. I wondered if I could make this kind of contribution to other people's lives, make a bit of difference, and maybe even make this world a better place to work, live, and love.

So I took my curiosity and Frisbees to Europe where I studied during fall and winter and travelled madly in spring and summer. I slept on trains, ate in vegetable markets, and engaged with the people I met in every direction. I taught Frisbee to families in parks and was invited into their homes for dinner. I played Frisbee on the beach and ended up at parties with new friends. I sold Frisbees in the streets and was overlooked by the police who simply smiled.

Whether on Scandinavia's modern trains, Rome's vibrant streets, or Morocco's earthy squares, I discovered that I could lift people's eyes and spirits with my simple piece of plastic. Riding with the wind by day and on rumbling trains at night, my life became a real-world expression of the Frisbee advertising slogan, "You just can't do it alone."

Even during those carefree days I was learning something useful—that effective methods for connecting people can also be easy to apply. *Uplifting someone else's spirit can be as simple as putting a smile on your face, a compliment in your voice, or a Frisbee on your finger.*

My flying discs were simple tools for creating connections, overcoming fears, evoking—and at times provoking—full participation. Getting people involved gave me deep satisfaction. Getting people to play together gave me even more.

Dan “Stork” Roddick worked for the Frisbee manufacturing company Wham-O. He heard about my adventures overseas and sent me business cards that read “Ron Kaufman, International Representative, International Frisbee Association.” This was the equivalent of deputizing an evangelist to take on the world. So I did.

I created a company called Disc Covering the World and spent two more years crossing borders and organizing flying disc tournaments, festivals, clinics, and family play days everywhere I went. I rallied students to an international Ultimate game in London’s Hyde Park and created an Official Frisbee Sanctuary with a willing youth hostel warden in Belgium. I served as Master of Ceremonies at the Smithsonian Frisbee Festival in Washington, D.C., the Milton Keynes Bowl Air Day in the United Kingdom, and the World Frisbee Championships at the Rose Bowl in California.

Throughout these adventures, Stork was an encouraging patron, collaborator, advisor, and friend. He saw the world through the lens of a sociologist and believed that we could shape culture with festivals and sports, that we could popularize the Spirit of the Game. We shared the dedication of those who uplift themselves by deliberately serving others. But we didn’t call it service at the time. We called it play.

One year when I was Master of Ceremonies at the Rose Bowl, I discovered that collective energy is malleable and people who organize others bear a responsibility to shape that energy with care. One hot summer day, someone pushed a scrawled note onto my

clipboard: “A big dog is barking desperately in a white van in the parking lot with all the windows rolled up. It’s hot!!” I looked up at the enormous crowd and paused, then took a deep breath and announced, “Ladies and Gentlemen. If you drove here today in a white van with a big dog, your canine friend is getting hot and would like to see you in the parking lot *right now*.”

My attempt to put a light spin on a serious situation failed and 65,000 people hollered “Boo!” A wave of darkness rolled out of the crowd and onto the field. Competitors stopped playing. Frisbees fell to the ground. Everyone paused, waiting. I responded from pure instinct and called out to the crowd, “How many of you came here today to have a really good time?” The crowd yelled back “Yeah!” and the wave of darkness floated away. The dog lived to bark another day, and everyone was uplifted.

Guiding the energy of any group toward a constructive purpose is an essential form of service. This is true whether you are leading a team, focusing a department, building the culture of an entire organization, or contributing to the future of our global civilization.

In 1985, I started another company to connect people across cultures with long-standing histories of misunderstanding and mistrust. I organized Frisbee Friendship Tours to the People’s Republic of China, was featured in *LIFE* magazine, guided Youth Ambassadors of America to the Soviet Union, and was interviewed on Chinese and Soviet TV. One member of the Soviet politburo understood what I was really doing—connecting people—so he sanctioned our gathering with children, clowns, and plastic flying discs in Moscow’s heavily patrolled Red Square.

Through all these crazy events and years of ceaseless travel, another lesson emerged. For my curious gatherings to succeed,

I had to work with police and parks departments, radio stations, newspapers, commercial sponsors, Frisbee experts, novices, and even dogs. I had to figure out what each of these groups wanted to achieve and then design and deliver an event that gave each group what it valued.

“I don’t know what your destiny will be, but this I know: the only ones amongst you who will be truly happy are those who have sought and found a way to serve.”

*Albert Schweitzer,
Nobel Prize winner*

Radio stations want interesting interviews. Sponsors need high visibility. Expert players enjoy good music and good crowds. Parks departments appreciate clean and safe events. Police insist on orderly traffic. Photographers seek “the shot” to capture the essence of the scene. Dogs need cool shade and clean water. *When each group gets what it really needs, and when all of us feel well served and understood, then everyone can be uplifted together.*

This lesson applies far beyond the Frisbee field. Whenever people with different interests meet in the fields of community or commerce, each of us makes a fundamental choice to focus first on what we want or on serving others. The surprising truth is this: the best way to get what you want in life is by helping others get what they want.

Surprising Singapore

In 1990, I went to Singapore for one week at the invitation of Singapore Airlines and the government’s National Productivity Board. The country was seeking to transform from a low-cost

manufacturing base to a value-adding center for services, ideas, and innovation. One week stretched into a month, then into a year, and now into more than two incredible decades.

During that time, I helped create a service curriculum for the nation, teaching thousands to create more value in the world and in their lives through service. I created the company UP! Your Service with its cheeky name to highlight three important points: *UP!* is the direction you'll travel to grow your income, your company, or your career. *Your* is a declaration of personal responsibility—this upward action must be taken by you. *Service* is your dedication to caring about other people, secure in the knowledge that you get more for yourself when you create for others what they appreciate, respect, and value.

Service industries have always been in my client list with Singapore Airlines, Raffles Hotel, and Changi Airport among the first distinguished organizations I served. Retail, hospitality, health care, insurance, finance, and real estate companies all appreciate the value of delivering great service. But there is also growing demand from the technology, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, government, and other sectors. The value of service as a differentiator is especially high in industries in which products are easily commoditized and delivery is quickly matched.

Over the years, I have seen profound changes in people's attitudes and actions and dramatic improvements in many companies' service performance, with measurable gains in reputation, market share, and profits. Organizations that build vibrant and uplifting service cultures enjoy a sustainable competitive advantage, attracting and retaining better customers as well as more talented and motivated employees.

The Global Service Challenge

Two contradictory themes run throughout human history. One is the theme of misunderstanding: avoiding dialogue, accumulating mistrust, and armed conflict. The other is better understanding: creating dialogue, building new value, and accumulating trust. Selfishness and fear are at the root of the first, while compassion, generosity, and a commitment to serving others are at the heart of the latter. What causes someone to choose one path over the other? Why are some people so persistently caring and others so regularly rude? Why do some experience life as an ongoing opportunity, while others suffer it as a source of never-ending complaints? More importantly, how can we interrupt this pattern of conflict and missed opportunities to create better lives—and give our children a better future?

The challenge we face today is global in scale and scope: to bring a passion for uplifting service to every culture and corner of the world. The principles of delivering superior service should be taught in our schools, practiced in our communities, and woven into every fabric of our lives.

Years ago I made the decision to serve a larger social purpose. That desire has been at the core of my intentions and actions from organizing Frisbee festivals and international tours to designing and delivering service improvement and culture-building programs. I put my ideas and energy to work to promote the well-being of others. Now, you can do this, too.

We live in an extraordinary time. We have the technological and social ability to connect and serve each other as never before. Yes, there are many problems, but also breakthroughs. There are

confused and dangerous individuals, but also many people acting with commitment, compassion, and concern.

I believe the readers of this book are people who enjoy making useful contributions. Whether you do this in your work and your community, or in your home and personal life, the service you provide to others creates a more enlightened planet for us all.

Thank you for reading and sharing this book and for putting what you learn into action. As you apply what you learn, other people will be uplifted in their lives, and you will be uplifted in yours.

I hope we have the privilege of meeting in person one day soon, and sharing the joy of uplifting service.

My warmest and best wishes to you,

Ron Kaufman



Tools *for* Your Journey

Every great expedition begins with a great idea. However, embarking on your journey into a new world also requires planning, commitment, and the right set of tools. Great explorers prepare themselves with proper gear and resources. To help you succeed along the path, we have provided all the tools you will need to uplift your service performance and build an uplifting service culture—free articles, videos, and easy to follow guides—revealing new ways you can begin transforming your culture today.

Get these **FREE** resources
now at www.RonKaufman.com



Article Library

Hundreds of tips, techniques, and real best practice examples with action steps you can apply right away. Learn what you can do right now to improve your service performance and build a stronger service culture.



Video Library

Innovative ideas and useful insights. Watch these short videos to understand the benefits, issues, and challenges in building an uplifting service culture. You will learn a lot in just a few short minutes.



Assessments

Are you an Uplifting Service Provider? Take the quiz to find out. Are you an Uplifting Service Leader? Take the test to discover your rating. Do you have an Uplifting Service Culture? Find out now.



Webinars

Ron Kaufman explains how the Uplifting Service architecture works, and how you can put it to work right away. Each webinar is packed with case study examples, insights, and results. You can learn more online, anytime, at your convenience.



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Beautiful images and inspiring quotations to uplift everyone where you work and live. Colorful posters are in high-resolution format for you to print, hang on your walls, and enjoy. Slide shows can be used for meetings and special events. Attractive screen savers to uplift you when you are serving others.



Quotations on Service

Thousands of quotations on service from the author, Ron Kaufman, and other famous people. Enjoy and share these meaningful words of wisdom.



Meet Ron Kaufman

Ron Kaufman is the world's premiere thought-leader, educator, and motivator for uplifting customer service and building service cultures. Ron is the author of 14 other books on service, business, and inspiration.

Ron provides powerful insights from working with clients all over the world in every major industry for more than twenty years. Ron is an inspiration to leaders and managers with his content rich and entertaining speeches, and his impactful, interactive workshops. He is rated one of the world's "Top 25 Who's Hot" speakers by *Speaker Magazine*.

Ron has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, and *USA Today*. He is passionately committed to uplifting the spirit and practice of service worldwide.

EMAIL / WEB:

Enquiry@RonKaufman.com

RonKaufman.com



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A breakthrough book
that will surprise, delight, and uplift you,
your organization, and your team.

In *Uplifting Service*, Ron Kaufman takes you on a journey into the new world of service. Through dynamic case studies and best-practice examples, you will learn how the world's leading companies have changed the game, and how you can successfully follow this path to an uplifting service transformation.

“Read this book, apply the steps. Watch your culture transform and your perspective on service change forever. Ron Kaufman has unlocked the mystery of service. Get ready for a magnificent journey into a new world.”

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